



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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COUNTY SUES STATE OVER UNFUNDED MANDATES

State's Failure to Reimburse County Costs More Than \$30 Million

SAN DIEGO— The County of San Diego plans to take legal action against the State of California for failing to reimburse the County for the costs of performing State-mandated services as required by the California Constitution, Chairwoman Dianne Jacob of the Board of Supervisors announced today.

Over the past three years, San Diego County has spent more than \$30 million to perform services mandated by State law without reimbursement from the State. The County will ask the courts to find that the State has violated the Constitution, and to order the State to pay the County the money to which the County is legally entitled.

In addition, the County also will be asking the courts for an order relieving the County from the requirement to perform certain mandated services because of the State's failure to pay its bills.

"The State has been the equivalent of a negligent parent shirking its responsibilities," said Chairwoman Jacob. "San Diego County can no longer afford to pick up the State's tab. The State must be held accountable for failing to pay for its own programs," she said.

"In 1979, the people of the State of California voted to amend the California Constitution to require the State to pay counties when the Legislature mandates counties to perform certain services," said John Sansone, San Diego County Counsel and President of the County Counsels' Association of California. "Because the State has failed to honor its legal obligation to pay for a whole host of services, we expect the courts will agree that the County has been paying the State's bills for too long," Sansone said.

The State budget proposal for fiscal year beginning on July 1, 2004, recommends that the State continue not paying counties for their costs to perform the State mandated programs.

The County will file legal actions asking the courts to: (1) order the State to reimburse the County for all of the costs the County has spent to perform these mandated programs, as required by the California Constitution, and (2) issue an order that the County no longer be required to perform certain mandated services because of the State's failure to pay the County.

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